

Chapter 3

Evaluation from the Coordination Perspective

In this Chapter, the RESPONSE 98 Exercise objectives found under the coordination perspective in Table 1-1 are presented with their evaluation elements and the findings made by the evaluation team. Items C7 and C9 in Table 1-1 were not covered in this exercise. State and local entities during the exercise addressed many coordination issues. Some of these were also addressed in the previous chapter, especially in the discussions regarding resources staging and public information. When evaluators find the same situations and report them from more than one viewpoint, these become areas of special concern to the emergency planners, who are undertaking corrective actions on the basis of RESPONSE 98 findings.

ALERT AND NOTIFICATION

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct emergency response alert and notification

- **Evaluation Element** – Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct emergency response alert and notification.
- **Finding** – Because of the threat from Hurricane Janet moving north along the East Coast of the United States, the Emergency Support Team (EST) at FEMA headquarters was activated to monitor the storm. The EST and the Regions I and II Regional Operating Centers (ROCs) were activated prior to the start of the exercise.

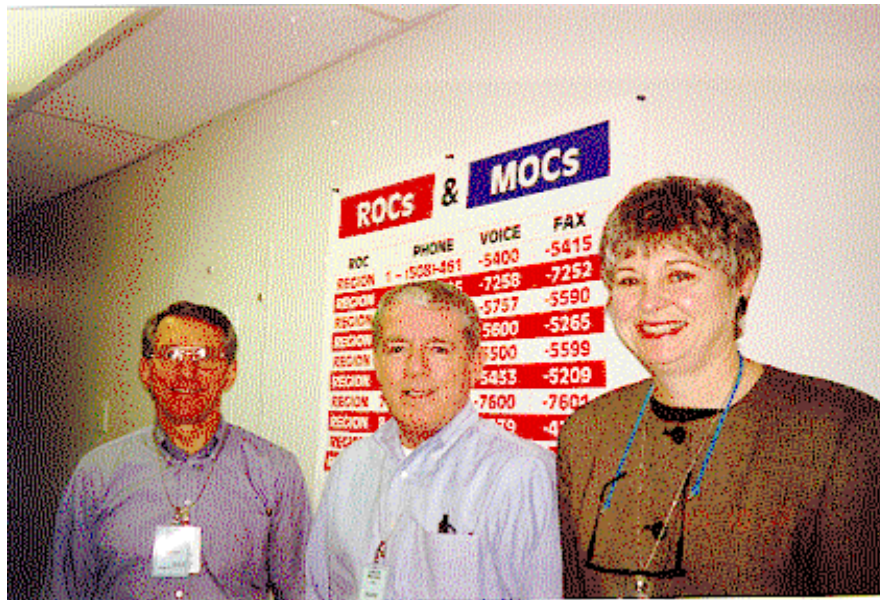


Figure 3-1. ROC I Staff Members.

When the Emergency Operations Center, Office Of Emergency Management, and the Emergency Management Organizations were activated, liaisons from the Regions were deployed to the States, and the Federal, Regional, and State Response Plans were activated. Region II deployed Emergency Response Team-Advance Element (ERT-As) to Albany, New York, and Trenton, New Jersey. Region I deployed an ERT-A to Connecticut. The ROCs in Regions I and II have up-to-date telephone and pager listings to use for alert and notification. Personnel rosters were not prepared for 24-hour staffing, since the exercise was played during 8-hour days.

ACTIVATION, STAGING AND MOBILIZATION/DEPLOYMENT OF FEDERAL RESOURCES

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct Activation, Staging, and Mobilization/Deployment of Federal resources

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability and effectiveness of State and local governments' emergency plans to develop emergency disaster resource requirements prior to an imminent Federal disaster declaration.
- **Finding** – In Regions I and II, initial mission assignments were prepared and issued to all Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). As the exercise progressed, task-specific mission assignments were issued, as appropriate.

It was apparent from the start of the exercise that Hurricane Janet would pose a significant threat with widespread damage throughout both regions. The exercise identified the importance of coordination among the affected Regions, States, and FEMA Headquarters before, during, and after a storm of Hurricane Janet's magnitude.

Requests for resources were generated by the States, forwarded to the ROC, and acted on without consideration of the resource availability. One example was the request for Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) assets. New Jersey and New York were the first states to request US&R teams. A day before the hurricane hit land, both States experienced storm damage, flooding, and wind damage, which overwhelmed local and State responders. This prompted requests for Federal US&R teams. Considering the projected storm path and predicted damage in many of the older urban areas in Regions I and II, a determination of available US&R resources needed to be made and a procedure put in place to deploy these resources effectively to the areas of greatest need. The States and Regions should consider executing Mutual Aid Agreements with other States and Regions for US&R resources. While the EST is gathering information on damage and projecting needs for resources based on reports from the regions and States, as

well as from predictive modeling, a procedure needs to be established to ensure that deployment of resources is consistent.

- **Evaluation Element** – Participate in the selection of staging areas.
 - **Finding** – In Region II, the ESF-1 representative on the ERT-A and representatives from the State of New York participated in the selection of staging areas. The criteria for staging areas focused on whether the location was out of the path of the storm, along with its ability to receive, account for, and achieve secure distribution to the affected areas in the region.
- **Evaluation Element** – Examine the Department of Defense’s (DoD’s) procedures to coordinate the provision of disaster support to local, State, and Federal agencies prior to and after a Presidential Disaster Declaration.
 - **Finding** – A request was sent to the DoD representative asking for a “list of available DoD resources.” DoD has numerous resources, and their use in any disaster would be determined by the emergency situation. DoD resources on the Federal level would be coordinated through a representative of Director of Military Support who would be located at the EST and who would have a list of available resources and procedures to acquire the resources.

It was noted that to ask for a list of “all available resources” with no specific qualifiers would cause extra, non-productive work.

- **Evaluation Element** – Validate individual State Initial Response Resources (IRR) requirements for hurricanes.
 - **Finding** – All States developed IRR lists, in coordination with ESFs 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11 and the DoD. ESFs 1 and 7 provided the locations that IRR packages were to be deployed to as well as a point of contact upon arrival. IRR packages arrived at Westover, Massachusetts, on September 9 at 8:00 p.m., and on September 10 at 12:00 p.m.
- ESF-1 provided transportation to the mobilization sites. Transportation was waiting for IRR materials as they arrived. Although Pease Air Force Base was designated as an arrival point for additional IRR materials, actual delivery had not been scheduled prior to the end of the exercise.



Figure 3-2. *DoD Team at Region I ROC.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine IRR Time-Phased Force Deployments List (TPFDL) concepts and procedures.
 - **Finding** – In Region II, IRR TPFDL coordination was initiated but not completed due to exercise termination.
- **Evaluation Element** – Assess activation, staging, and deployment of selected national response teams (e.g., Urban Search and Rescue Incident Support Teams, Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces, and Rapid Assessment Capability).
 - **Finding** – Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) and Incident Support Teams were activated and deployed. The process used to activate and deploy the teams was confusing because of the large number of requests and the lack of prioritization to areas most in need of US&R teams.
- **Evaluation Element** – Validate adequacy of the standardized cache of ERT-A equipment and ensure equipment is in place for deployment.
 - **Finding** – The ERT-A caches were identified, inspected, restocked, and validated on the first day of the exercise. The contents were compared to the immediate needs of the States with the intent to augment them with Federal resources already available in the affected areas.



Figure 3-3. *Urban Search and Rescue Team Gathering for Briefing.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Test timeliness of identifying and setting up mobilization centers.
 - **Finding** – Mobilization centers were identified, established, activated and ready to receive assets by day three of the exercise, when Hurricane Janet had passed through the northeast coast of the United States.
- **Evaluation Element** – Assess overall Federal responsiveness to the pre-staging of assets.
 - **Finding** – The overall Federal responsiveness to the pre-staging of assets was excellent. Packages were available and ready for deployment upon request. Procedures based on regional response plans were in place for delivery and control.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the EST Logistics Section’s ability to track and account for deployed commodities.
 - **Finding** – The EST relied on each Region to track and account for requested and deployed commodities.

In Region II, both action items and information messages were entered into the “action tracking system.” The actions that needed to be tracked to ensure that resources were properly deployed (or efforts were underway to obtain and deploy those assets) were included in the same message tracking system as the requirements that were not

considered critical to the affected areas. A separate tracking log would have reduced confusion.

Increased communication between the ERT-A elements deployed to the disaster area and their ROC counterparts prior to requesting specific resources is recommended. The EST believed that the damage estimates and projections might have been overstated and unrealistic and thus generated excessive requests for resources. For example, nine million homes were considered severely damaged or destroyed in one State, and there was a requirement for 775,000 cots in one State.

COORDINATION

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct coordination when a catastrophic hurricane is predicted to make landfall

- **Finding** – Evaluation of this objective clearly indicates that the various FEMA response organizations including the EST and ROCs were able to coordinate the hurricane-related response activities with the various ESFs and the States. This coordination was accomplished via a variety of means, including the telephone, teleconferences, face-to-face meetings, briefings, fax machine, the action-tracking system, e-mail, and radio.
- **Evaluation Element** – Determine if State and local emergency plans have current, effective, and integrated Mutual Aid Agreements with neighboring States and Provinces of Canada where appropriate.
- **Finding** – Information provided by the Region II ROC Director indicated that neither New York nor New Jersey has any Mutual Aid Agreements in place. The exercise demonstrated the potential value of Emergency Management Assistance Compacts (EMACs). At present only 22 States have signed the Compacts. EMACs would be an effective means to develop Mutual Aid Agreements, and expansion of the arrangements to all States would enable sharing of large asset bases, like those in New York, with other States.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to coordinate among ESFs and States.
- **Finding** – The Region II ROC should have procedures manuals and other resource materials accessible to all personnel. There did not appear to be any resource materials such as the *Federal Response Plan*, State plans and procedures, ROC standard operating procedures, ROC relocation plans, ESF plans or procedures, etc., available in the ROC for all personnel.

A number of maps of the Region and various storm-related maps and charts were posted on the wall of the ROC, but many of these maps and charts were generic in nature and depicted regional and political boundaries, predicted storm paths, etc. Participants commented that generic maps and charts should have been updated with specific information related to the storm's daily movement and location, location of key emergency response and recovery facilities, and geographic areas impacted by the storm. Having these basic planning resources available would be very helpful to the ROC and ESF personnel in planning, coordinating, and carrying out the basic emergency response and recovery activities in response to State needs.

During the daily weather advisories, the Hurricane Center Liaison used the HUREVAC (Hurricane Evacuation) model to respond to questions regarding anticipated storm surge levels, as well as the strength and extent of wind patterns inland. During one of the early weather advisories, the Hurricane Center Liaison noted that the HURREVAC Model is not Windows based. Thus, moving from one program to another is difficult, and responding to requests for information is inconvenient and cumbersome (less timely).

Pertinent information (e.g., daily action plans and priorities, weather and storm damage information, mass care needs, etc.) was provided to the ESFs and ROC personnel in briefings, videos, and computer slides. The information was rarely provided to the ESFs and ROC personnel in hard copy. It was recommended that the various types of information be provided in hard copy or on email to all key ROC personnel (ESFs and ROC section heads). The ESFs and ROC heads can distribute extra copies of the information materials so interested ROC and ESF support personnel and observers could have access. Having this information available in hard copy would facilitate ROC and ESF planning and coordination activities and also provide a "paper trail" documenting all aspects of the various emergency management entities' response and recovery efforts. This, in turn, would provide a more focused and timely response to State needs.

- **Evaluation Element** – Determine the need for ESF-1 liaisons to State EOCs.
- **Finding** – Region II deployed State liaisons on the first day of the exercise, and Region I deployed teams beginning on Day 2 of the exercise. Region II ESF-1 and Transportation did deploy a liaison to the New Jersey EOC on Day 2 of the exercise. The liaison was not deployed on Day 1 of the exercise because the State of New Jersey did not begin exercise play until Day 2. No liaison was deployed to the New York EOC. The Regions deployed ERT-A teams to the impacted areas.

The ERT-A teams consisted of representatives from the Regional ESFs, as specified by the *Federal Response Plan*. The purpose of the ERT-A teams was to assess the situation, collect damage information, and determine response requirements to assist the States. The ESFs took actions to determine the impact

of the storm and identified, mobilized, and deployed resources to support response activities in the affected States.



Figure 3-4. *Regional Operations Support Staff.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Exercise DoD's participation in the National Catastrophic Disaster Response Group (CDRG), EST, National Emergency Response Teams (ERT-N), ROCs, ERT-A, Disaster Field Offices, State Operations Centers, and Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) response coordinating bodies.
- **Finding** – Coordination with DoD indicated that DoD was a full participant in the simulated exercise response activities to the hurricane postulated in the scenario.
- **Evaluation Element** – Assess DoD's Command and Control disaster response system connectivity and procedures in providing support to a disaster that affects multiple Federal Regions.
- **Finding** – DoD participated in the CDRG and EST at the National level and the ROC and ERT-A at the Regional level. DoD does not participate in the State and local EOCs except for National Guard resources in a State role. During this exercise, DoD activated its normal disaster response system procedures.

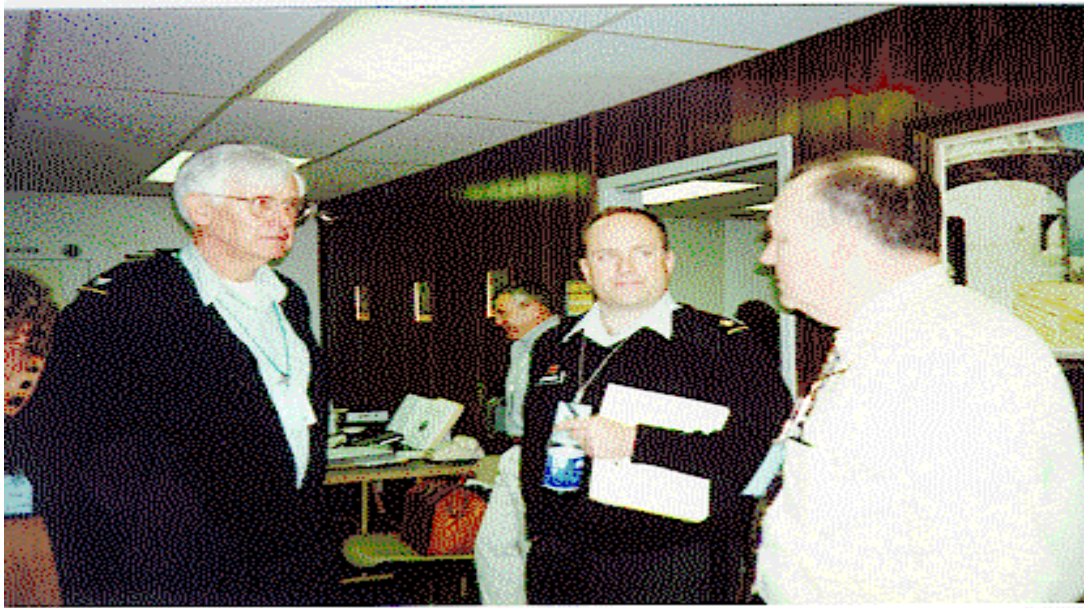


Figure 3-5. *Discussions Among Participants.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability of the DoD resource database to identify DoD assets available to support Military Support to Civilian Authorities operations within the disaster area.
 - **Finding** – DoD used its resource database to identify pertinent DoD assets for responding to an event of this nature. DoD assets are accessed through First Army and Forces Command Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. DoD support is provided under Title 10 the United States Code when the President has authorized the active military to respond to a natural disaster.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the EST's ability to coordinate with and distribute information effectively to the CDRG, ESFs, and regions.
 - **Finding** – The EST was able to coordinate effectively and facilitate the distribution of pertinent information to the various entities involved in the response to the postulated hurricane. The initial decision to operate a limited cell in the EST resulted in insufficient capabilities and the need to fully staff the EST on Day 3 of the exercise. Once the EST was fully staffed, it was able to more effectively monitor the status of the exercise activities.
- **Evaluation Element** – Test regional ability to identify requirements and transmit those requirements to the EST.

- **Finding** – Throughout the exercise, the ROCs, with the assistance of the ERT-As, were able to identify the basic emergency response needs to meet the requirements of overwhelmed State and local governments. Basic documents used in carrying out the Region's emergency response activities included the following: *Federal Response Plan*; Regional response plans, standard operating procedures, and a host of other plans including ESF guidelines, standard operating procedures, and handbooks.

The Regions should consider the availability and viability of the action tracking system, if the ROC is relocated to an alternate location. If the system could not be utilized at the alternate ROC location, a standard operating procedure would be needed to clearly delineate how to continue action tracking. If such a standard operating procedure exists it should be made available and tested periodically.

The automated action tracking system should maintain a constant backup of data contained in the system to prevent the loss of critical data should the system crash during the response to a real-world event. In addition, the system should be refined so that ESFs could incorporate pertinent information regarding actions being taken on assigned action items and update or reflect the current status of particular action items without violating the integrity of the data contained in the system.



Figure 3-6. *Establishment of Mission Assignments at the ROC.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Assess EST ability to coordinate the allocation and prioritization of requested resources.
- **Finding** – The mission system used in the ROCs is not priority based, and some of the information was viewed as invalid. The use of computer-based information systems slowed the overall response operation down. The system, as designed, does not allow ESFs to: (a) incorporate pertinent information into the system regarding action being taken on assigned action items; and (b) update or reflect the current status of particular action items. The system at Region I crashed during Day 1 of the exercise; however, the Region was able to reenter the last data into the system prior to the beginning of Day 2 exercise activities. This forced the EST to prioritize the allocation of resources without full benefit of ROC input.

It is recommended that the system be improved so that it can be priority based and will include information regarding action being taken on assigned actions items. Procedures should be developed to allow coordination between the ROC staff and the State.

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine procedures to coordinate sourcing, procurement, and receipt of critical commodities.
- **Finding** – This was accomplished through the EST's standard operating procedures in accordance with the *Federal Response Plan*.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate FEMA's Incident Reporting procedures (monitor flow from initial source, through the National Emergency Coordination Center, to other Federal agencies).
- **Finding** – Based on review of the overall exercise proceedings, it is clear that FEMA effectively utilized the established incident reporting procedures. The key part of the incident reporting process was the Daily Situation Report. While the situation reports would normally be prepared twice a day during a real event, only one situation report was prepared each day during the exercise because the exercise play was limited to an 8-hour day.

Throughout the exercise, the ROC Director or other key ROC staff members (e.g., Deputy ROC Director, Operations Chief, etc.) conducted periodic briefings to inform the ESFs and ROC staff members of pertinent information relative to the response effort. All ROC ESFs and staff members were involved in decision making through the conduct of numerous conference calls and meetings.



Figure 3-7. *Providing Information to the Public via Situation Reports.*

PUBLIC INFORMATION, MEDIA RELATIONS, CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON, AND OTHER PUBLIC OUTREACH FUNCTIONS

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct Public Information, Media Relations, Congressional Liaison and other Public Outreach Functions

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate whether State and local governments successfully and effectively distributed emergency information to the public.
- **Finding** – All participating State and local governments distributed emergency information to the public. A Public Information Officer and Congressional Liaison Officer were designated for the EST and each ROC. These individuals processed the release of information consistent with that being released by the States. Primary channels used were press releases, radio station calls, and posting of information on the Internet.

DONATIONS

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct management of donated goods and services and maintain compatibility with the Federal Donations Policy

- **Evaluation Element** – Test interaction between Federal, State, and volunteer agencies' donations plans for ease of operability.
 - **Finding** – Volunteer agencies' donation plans were coordinated between Federal and State response organizations. Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut and Rhode Island have response plans in place. Massachusetts's plan is under development, and Connecticut's and Rhode Island's plans are under review and redevelopment.

The only request to FEMA for donations assistance came from New Jersey. Vermont and Massachusetts fully played donations management. These States have attended Donations training at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI). They activated their plans, identified donations coordinators, activated donations coordination teams, established donations coordination phone-banks, and established warehouses for donations resource staging areas. Connecticut had a State Emergency Management Agency official speak about how a donations management operation would work in Connecticut but did not simulate any donations play. New Hampshire, Maine, and Rhode Island all had virtually no donations management play in the exercise.

The Regions should have been discussing Federal assistance with donation management prior to landfall. The States that do not have completed donation plans need to continue development. States should participate in EMI State Donations Management classes if they have not already done so.

- **Evaluation Element** – Test the effectiveness of the donations information management system.
 - **Finding** – The NYSEMO and New Jersey Office of Emergency Management used the donations information management system. The response organizations were able to use the donations information management system without breakdowns or delays.
- **Evaluation Element** – Test Procedures for processing offers of international assistance.
 - **Finding** – Procedures for processing offers of international assistance were not very clear. The Region I ROC Director and his staff were actively involved acting as the initial contacts for donations. Specific international donation plans and procedures should be established.

MITIGATION

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct mitigation in preparing for emergency response implementation prior to the landfall of a potentially catastrophic hurricane

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability and effectiveness of State and local emergency plans to "expedite" warnings, evacuations, and sheltering of at-risk populations for the purpose of saving lives and preserving health.
- **Finding** – The States and Regions made provisions to expedite warnings and evacuations and sheltering of at-risk populations. Evacuation messages should be pre-canned as much as possible and prepared in many different languages to communicate with the diverse population within these Regions.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE USING NEW PLANS AND PROCEDURES

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct emergency response using new operational concepts and procedures, such as the National Emergency Response Team, and the Incident Support Team

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate Director Of Military Support Emergency Response Team (ERT-N) liaison officer support to an ERT-N deployment on the National Airborne Operations Center.
- **Finding** – Initial information provided by DoD's representative in the Region II ROC indicated that information available from 1st Army Headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, indicated that an ERT-N had been deployed to Chicopee, Massachusetts, on the afternoon of Day 1 of the exercise. Current and complete procedures were available in both Regions I and II for the Emergency Response Teams.

The EST Director confirmed this simulated deployment on the morning of Day 2 of the exercise. However, on the morning of Day 3 of the exercise, DoD's representative in the ROC noted that the information regarding the simulated deployment of the ERT-N by 1st Army on Day 1 of the exercise was erroneous. Deployment of the ERT-N would not occur until after a Presidential declaration of a disaster under the Stafford Act. No further action was noted or observed on this matter following the Presidential declaration of a disaster for Hurricane Janet on Day 3 of the exercise.

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate procedural documentation for EST, ERT, ERT-A, (e.g., standard operating procedures, manuals, field guides).
- **Finding** – Current and complete procedures were available for all Region II ROC personnel. However, only some of the Region II ROC personnel had the ROC standard operating procedures and the Region II *Regional Response Plan* available on their desks.

The Region I ROC standard operating procedure (SOP) was not provided to the ESF representatives because the Region was in the process of developing it. As a result, some confusion was noted when reports were produced. A typical lack of procedural coordination was that after the senior staff met with the ROC director, information was not disseminated to the branch ESF representatives. The Operations Chief conducted meetings during the day that were not scheduled and without all ESF representatives or branch chiefs in attendance. When the ESF-12 representative arrived at the ROC, there was no briefing given on the current situation, ROC priorities, and ongoing actions.

Region I ROC should continue to work on SOPs and distribute them to all ESF members at the ROC. ESF representatives who arrive at various times during a disaster should be provided a short briefing on the current situation, ROC priorities, and other important information.

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the Territorial Concept.
 - **Finding** – Region II's regional response organization employed the Territorial Concept in its response to the simulated disaster. This was accomplished in two ways. First, the EST simulated the use of the territorial Logistics Supply System in Georgia to meet needs in FEMA Regions I and II. Second, FEMA Regions I through IV simulated constant communication with one another and resource sharing as they would in a real-world event.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate effectiveness of Community Relations in effectively reaching the affected communities with appropriate information.
 - **Finding** – In Region II, the community relations teams were not deployed. However, the Deputy Director for the Region II ROC Operations Section noted that the Region II cadre manager for the community relations teams had pulled together a roster of available personnel to staff the teams had they been directed to deploy.

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